

Series I
Correspondence,
1932-1973

Box 3, Folder 26

Informal letters sent,
January 3, 1949 -
February 16, 1949

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Box II
Outgoing Informal, 1948

Dear Sam (Morison), 31 August 1948
Excellent discussion of problems of Battle Analysis

Dear Dick (Conolly), 25 October 1950
Comment on War College

Dear Lynde (McCormick), 25 October
NWC Electronic War Game

Dear Lynde (McCormick), 23 August
Electronic War Game

Box II
Outgoing, 1949

Hoke and Margaret, 3 January 1949
Comments on China

Dear Mort, 3 February 1949
Comment on promotion, quoting Spruance on p. 2 and
discussion of problem of analysis

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3 January 1949

Dear Hoke and Margaret:

Thank you very much for your attractive Christmas card and for the friendly comments on it. Needless to say, I appreciated them very much, and regret that we could not have spent New Year's Eve together.

I was interested to hear of how many hundreds of Admirals, Generals and visiting firemen are hanging around your area. Naturally it is so, because of the importance of the base, as well as the importance of the Commander Battleships, Cruisers Atlantic Fleet. I think that that is a fine job.

With reference to myself, as you, Hoke, perhaps know, I was discovered in the Far East with a left bundle branch block of my heart. It was originally supposed to be a very serious disease, but less and less so, apparently, as knowledge of the heart increases. The Mare Island Hospital wished to retire me in September 1946, but Admiral Denfeld personally told me not to let them retire me, as they wanted to promote me. He said that I was No. 1 on the list of inequities in the Pacific and that King was responsible. I therefore came back to Mare Island and they declared me fit for any and all duty. I personally think that I was fit at the time, and had thought that I was fit until May of last year (1948) when I noticed my trouser stick on my right leg. I went to the hospital and there they advised me to make a study of my legs, which study the hospital also made. Meanwhile, when I was out at the coast last June, I went to Mare Island and saw the doctors who had declared me fit sometime before. They examined me, and in September 1948 wrote me a letter verifying the opinion expressed by Captain Ross sometime before that there was every reason why I should be retired, and recommended that I retire. I thought it over and decided that I would let the cards fall where they might, and appeared before the Medical Board on 15 November. The Board busted me on my annual physical, ordered me to the hospital, and surveyed me for retirement. That is all I know. Very frankly, I don't know what shape I am actually in, although I am not the fellow that I was when I first arrived at the War College. I had thought that some of my difficulty was psychosomatic, but the medical staff say that that is very tiny--that I am an extrovert, and a very marked one, rather than an introvert who would worry about such matters. I feel completely up in the air, but I am satisfied that the decision of the Medical Board is correct and that I should be retired.

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Rip Struble told me about six months ago that he thought my medical record was denying me any advancement. I guess that this is one of the factors which have prevented me from retiring as Vice Admiral, but there are many other which I have often mentioned to you, the most important of which is my failure to recognize the competence of many of the flag officers today.

You will be interested to know that the present which I purchased with the help of the student body and staff of the College for Admiral Spruance has finally arrived in Monterey. The Admiral was delighted to receive it, although, as he says in his letter to Admiral Brown, he hesitated to receive it because of the regulations. He decided they didn't apply to him as a retired officer. How right we were in estimating his attitude and in delaying the delivery of the gift!

I don't know whether when I am retired I will continue writing these books or not. At the present moment it looks as if the Medical Board is even opposed to that, but I do not choose to discuss the matter until the retirement proceedings are effective.

I miss you and Margaret up here very much, as you well know. I know that although you are happy where you are, your heart will always be up here. Admiral Beary is fitting in extremely well, and I think that the College is running along nicely under the direction which you and Admiral Spruance gave it.

Dave Richardson has written me from Tsingtao--"The cruise has been most interesting although we did not fly nearly as much as we hoped. Several times in Tsingtao, Captain Russell Smith and I had dinner together. Bob Strong, who was Mr. Hickoks' predecessor at the War College, is the consul in Tsingtao. He and his wife came to dinner aboard ship to have a look at a carrier. I was rather surprised to learn that State Department officials out here have not felt free to express their opinions regarding China frankly. It seems that transient experts who on several recent occasions were sent out by congressional committees, arrive with their conclusions already in mind. To suggest that possibly a Chinese Communist victory in China might not be nearly so bad as some of the alternatives is enough to arouse suspicion of "Communitistic sympathies"--a charge State Department officials particularly don't like. STRONG thinks we should do business with the Chinese Communists, as does Admiral Badger. The Chinese reportedly dislike Americans, but dislike the Russians much more. He feels perfectly sure that all the material aid in the world would be useless. Our people have seen quantities of aircraft now ruined by lack of care still sitting where they were first delivered. Except for food, the same is true of other materials.

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Mr. Truman's victory was a bitter blow to the Nationalists as they were expecting increased aid on their own terms."

Best wishes for the New Year. As ever,

Your Old Friend,

Rear Admiral Allan E. Smith
Commander Battleships, Cruisers Atlantic Fleet
U.S. Naval Base, Bldg. N-23
Norfolk 11, Virginia

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7 January 1949

Dear Jane and Jimmie:

I enjoyed receiving your Christmas card very much indeed, not only because it was from you both, for whom I have always a genuine affection, but also because it came from my old Hawaiian playground--Oahu. I imagine that Oahu is as interesting today as it was in my day, providing, of course, that you know the people. I have no doubt but that you know many of them.

I note that you talk about returning to the mainland to live in California. That is where I plan to hang out my shingle, for the present anyway.

Needless to say, I was astonished to note that your name, Jimmie, was missing from the last selection list. Why this was so, I do not know, as both you and Tom Keliher seem to have been the only members of Admiral Nimitz's staff who were given the go-by. What a bad boy you must have been. Perhaps it was because you were the only graduates of the Naval War College.

As for myself, I had no interest in this last Selection Board. I had many friends on it but that does not mean anything before these Boards. To be selected, one must have an absolute crony there who will take off his hat and coat and fight. Qualifications of high command in matters of this kind appear to be of secondary and even trivial importance. I have this statement from such high sources that I feel confident that it is absolutely true. Take my own case! The Panel in November 1946 and the Board in November 1947 both boosted me to the skies. I was a big shot, and as one Vice Admiral on the Panel wrote me, it was incredible that after what was said about me I did not make it. Also Oldendorf on the 47 Panel told me that, although I was in the finals, the selections appeared to have been made on personal factors.

However, now all of that is behind us and we must look to the future. Mine will not be a very pleasant one because they have busted me again on my heart. I have a left bundle branch block which is now showing up in my legs in edema, and the

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medical profession says that they don't want me to take a job of any kind. They busted me in the annual physical examination, and the medical survey for retirement is in Washington. However, don't be alarmed about me; I have faced vicissitudes all my life and I have won out in the end. I plan to do it in this case also!

With warmest personal regards and with Hauoli Makahiki Hou to you, I am as ever,

Your Old Friend,

Captain & Mrs. James Carter
Staff, Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet
Pearl Harbor, Oahu
T.H.

0742

7 January 1949

Dear Francesca and Brooksie:

It was very thoughtful of you to have sent me a card at Christmas time, and I am hastening to acknowledge it. Needless to say, I was extremely pleased that you thought of me over the holidays. You may rest assured that I also thought of you, although I did not send out any cards. The picture of your Newport home is an excellent one and although evidently taken a long time ago, still bears a remarkable resemblance to your present establishment. Certainly the thought of the many times that I have been there always brings a glow of happiness to me for which I give you thanks.

We have had a very interesting fall in Newport. The weather has always been generally good and the Clambake Club remained open until the first week in January.

I did not go to the Bruguieres's party, although I was asked, because I felt indisposed. But except for that, I kept fairly active.

Bill Whitehouse has gone south to the plantation, leaving Sybil here. However, she is not alone as she is having house guests. I will meet them on Saturday at the Whites, on Saturday evening at the Bruguieres, and Tuesday at Sybil's. I shall know them pretty well by then.

With best wishes to you both and with all wishes for a Happy New Year, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. & Mrs. Harold Brooks
Waldorf Towers
Motel Waldorf
New York, N.Y.

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10 January 1949

Dear Lillian and Lynde:

I received your Christmas card with a great deal of interest and need I say emotion. As you perhaps know, I am as fond of both of you as of anyone living, and the fact that you seem to maintain an affection for me is extremely gratifying. Your card, while simple, is extremely pretty and represents you both very well.

I don't know what I am going to do when I move out of this establishment. I failed to pass my annual physical early in November, with the result that I personally had no interest in the last Selection Board. I felt that the Navy being as talkative as can be, the minute a person has a personal medical failure it becomes gossiped into the most tremendous medical collapse. I remember returning home after having busted on my heart in the Philippines in the spring of 1946. I was informed in the Navy Department that they understood that I had a terrific heart attack and the fact that I was alive meant nothing, that most people understood that I was dead. Well, I am far from dead, but my heart is now showing indications of some weakness by giving me edema of the legs. I really don't know how bad the whole thing is, but the Medical Board has surveyed me for retirement. I have had the idea that I should like to continue writing these battles. Maybe I will, but that is to be decided in the future.

If you run across my doctor brother around the Bohemian Club, please say Hello to him. I am sure that he will enjoy renewing an acquaintance of long ago. It seems to me that he used to have a crush on one of your sisters.

I sat at the Army-Navy game beside Swede, Emily and little Emily. You can imagine the fun I had.

Thanks very much for your thought of me.

Sincerely,

Rear Admiral & Mrs. Lynde McCormick
San Francisco, Calif.

0744

12 January 1949

Dear Parker:

I was very pleased when I discovered that the Commander Parker whom Ensign Jerrnee reported as on the Rochester was, in fact, yourself. I therefore appreciate very much having you take up the strings from there and write me a letter.

As you well know, I was always very fond of you and thought that you were an excellent engineer officer of the good ship Minneapolis. You had been through a lot when I took command, and I know that for a while I worried you a lot. I didn't want to let you go when I did but thought for your own good that you should go. Pearson did a pretty decent job after you. You had trained him well!

I remember the famous day when you were torpedoed, or was it bombed by a Baka bomb. What a blow your ship received that day! It looked to me as if you had handled yourself very well indeed.

I appreciate your desire to get here to the War College and I strongly recommend it. Officers are normally selected for this College on their records but other factors also enter in, and I cannot say whether you were on an original list or not. I have no doubt that you will get on one if you are interested enough.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Your Old Shipmate,

R. W. Bates

Commander Alton Parker
USS ROCHESTER
c/o Fleet Post Office
New York, N.Y.

0745

17 January 1949

Dear Mr. Southgate:

With reference to your letter of 14 January, I feel that sometime around the end of this month to discuss with you the Battle of Midway will be quite satisfactory to me. I would suggest, however, that you hold the date tentative, and if you don't hear from me, come on up. I use the word tentative advisedly, as I am supposed to appear before a Retirement Board sometime around the end of this month or early next month. The date is merely a guess, as I don't know how these matters are handled in Bupers.

I agree with your Mr. Evans that as much real photography should be included in these movies as possible, consistent with maintaining the theme of command. It is very difficult for me to maintain this thought in the minds of those who have to work on these battles. Perhaps some live action will give life to the picture, and it may also emphasize the reality of the commander's position. On the other hand, it is purely historical and may have no actual value whatsoever. I leave that matter to better heads than mine in this type of work. All that I ask is that at no time is the command theme minimized or forgotten for any reason whatsoever.

I was awfully happy to hear that you are getting along so well with your work there. We are progressing with the Battle of Savo Island, but it will be some months before it is completed.

Best regards.

R. W. Bates

Mr. Howard Southgate
Project Supervisor
U.S. Naval Photographic Center
Naval Air Station
Anacostia 20, D.C.

0746

17 January 1949

Dear Teddy and Neo:

It was very kind of you to send me that Christmas card from Arizona. I thought it quite amusing, but never realized that Santa had a burro as his totter of Christmas gifts. It was my idea, being a Californian, that it must have been a grizzly bear. Thus we see that each part of the country designs Santa Claus and his equipment to fit themselves. I therefore forgive the burro.

Newport has been unusually gay since you have been away. In addition, the weather has been absolutely wonderful and rarely cold. On the other hand, rumor hath it that there is plenty of bad weather in your vicinity. Whether it has reached Arizona, I do not know, but the Colorado mountains have had a tough time. I sincerely trust that you haven't required your snowshoes.

If you will look in the last issue of Esquire you will see on one of the pages a picture of ten cigar smokers. One of them is Jack Astor and the other is Braddy Norman, Jr. I thought it quite remarkable that the Reading Room would have two out of ten. I buy the cigars but I don't smoke them.

Your friend Cordelia has been away for weeks but will, I hope, return soon. As a matter of interest, I am taking Daisy O'Donnell and the Richmonds to Bingo tonight. That is Cordelia's favorite sport. She never wins!

With warmest personal regards and many thanks again for thinking of me, I am as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Mr. & Mrs. Theodore P. Grosvenor
Scotsdale, Arizona

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20 January 1949

Dear Wesley and Margo:

I cannot begin to tell you how delighted I was when I received your charming Christmas card from San Diego. It is strange how closely your card forecast the weather conditions which did exist in your southern California. If you do not recollect, the card had three reindeer jumping through the clouds. I received one from Arizona showing the reindeer as burros. On this basis the New England reindeer should have been camels, for we have had practically no winter at all and almost a shortage of water.

I am pleased to see that you are in good shape and enjoying your San Diego duty, even though you found it necessary to purchase a house. You probably will be gratified in the end that you did purchase a house because Uncle Sam is paying for it month by month.

I should like very much to have seen you this Christmas, but I did not go out to the coast, not only because of the bad weather which was existing then but because I failed to pass my annual physical examination on November 15th. As a consequence I was sent to the hospital here in Newport, was surveyed for retirement, and have been notified that the survey recommending that I appear before a Retiring Board was approved by both BuMed and Bupers. I therefore expect about the end of this month to receive orders to appear before the Retiring Board in Washington. What this amounts to, I do not know. The decision of the Medical Board was not a surprise to me nor is it a surprise to you. Although when you declared me fit at Mare Island, I think I was pretty fit. During the past year I have suffered some swelling of my legs and edema appears during the daytime particularly. I found it best to slow down on my golf, and the medical profession directed me to cut out my swimming. I don't know what the decision of the Retiring Board will be nor what will occur to me after all of this is over. I don't know anyone on the Retiring Board except the President, who is Rear Admiral Griffin.

As indicated in the first paragraph, we have had a perfectly wonderful winter so far, and it seems almost incredible that last year at this time we had had seven ~~times~~ more snow

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than we had this year. In fact last year they set an all-time high record for this area--about 6 or 7 feet overall.

I cannot begin to tell you how much I have enjoyed both of you over the years. What a great help to me you have always been, and how much I look forward to seeing you when I can! Until then I want you both to take care of yourselves.

You will be glad to know that my family appear to be quite well.

With warmest personal regards and best wishes for the New Year, I am as ever,

Your Old Shipmate,

Captain & Mrs. Wesley Ross
4315 Hilldale Road
San Diego, Calif.

0749

21 January 1949

Dear Admiral and Mrs. Kalbfus:

This note is to acknowledge your thoughtfulness in including me the list of those to whom you sent Christmas cards. It was very thoughtful of you, and I am appreciative of your kindness. I must admit though that you underestimated, at least for the present, nature's handling of our own situation here in the Newport area, for your card shows "plenty snow" whereas in actuality it should show blooming tulips and cows in the fields eating of new-born grass.

I want to thank you also for the wonderful bottle of ancient scotch with which you so kindly presented me. It was entirely unnecessary, but is very typical of the recognition you have always maintained of old friends. God bless and keep you always.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Your Old Disciple and Admirer,

R. W. Bates

Admiral & Mrs. E.C. Kalbfus
Restmere
Newport, R.I.

0750

28 January 1949

Dear Admiral Hartman:

I cannot thank you too much for the extremely understanding manner with which you handled the War College problem of endeavoring to complete the Battle of Savo Island, to say nothing of my own problem in connection therewith. I have already spoken to Admiral Beary of your attitude in the matter, and he is very appreciative. It is a recognized thing in both military and civilian affairs that understanding in the high command often greatly facilitates the operations of those in lesser positions. Need I say, that your attitude has clearly proven the truth of the above adage.

The weather up here is very bad; it is snowing and raining, but I suppose in a few days things will clear up here as they did in December.

Please remember me most kindly to everyone there, and believe me again when I say that both the War College and myself are appreciative of your continuing interest in ~~their~~ *our* problems.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

R. Admiral Charles C. Hartman
Bureau of Personnel
Arlington, Va.

0751

31 January 1949

My dear Moran:

I received your invitation to the Peter Tare party at Ruppert's Brewery, and I had planned to attend if possible. Frank Robinson was going to drive down with me. However, this is all in the ashcan now because I am having a conference beginning the third of February with the scenario writers from the Navy Department who are preparing movies of the battles of Coral Sea, Midway and Savo Island which were prepared by my office. Naturally this has precedence over anything else. I regret very much my inability to be present with the Peter Tares as they are a wonderful bunch of fellows and have no doubt that the main vat at Rupperts will suffer heavy damage if not complete destruction. I think that it would be wise to capture it intact rather than to shell it, although with so many Peter Tares thirstily longing for a sip, a few extra holes might be effectively employed.

Please give my warmest personal regards to everyone, and in particular I wish to extend to you my own gratification of your exceptionally successful efforts in keeping the Peter Tares together. You are a great help!

With warmest personal regards and sincere regrets, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Mr. Joseph H. Moran II
17 Battery Place
New York 4, N.Y.

0752

31 January 1949

Dear Admiral:

I received your long and interesting letter on Saturday last, and you can well imagine my delight in hearing from you. Naturally I have an extremely high regard for your capabilities, not only as an officer but also as a gentleman, and it is my sincere regret that more officers of the Spruance fiber are not in the Navy. As you perhaps know, there is a growing tendency to move out of the Navy, for one reason or another, any officer of competence. In this connection I noted when I was down before the Retirement Board in Washington that Admiral Kent Hewitt was about to be retired for physical disability. I do hope that he was able to accomplish this retirement, as it will help him considerably financially. Evidently there is a little more wrong with Admiral Hewitt than he was willing to admit.

I am sending you two copies of the Battle of Midway which you requested. I would say that you are certainly entitled to keep them. This work is a glorious tribute to your command during a vital battle. Everyone who has read it, as well as the Coral Sea, has been extraordinary commendatory of the efforts of the Analytical Section here. As a matter of fact the Navy Department offered the other day upon my retirement to bring me back as a Rear Admiral to continue this work providing that it didn't take too long. I told them that whereas I was highly interested in this work, I had been pushed around enough, and said that I wouldn't take the assignment unless I was confident that I could remain on it for a number of years anyway, providing of course that the translations were available. What everyone wants me to attempt is the Battle for Leyte Gulf. This I would be very happy to do, but whether the translations are available now, I do not know. Admiral Brown is viewing my section more and more with a greedy eye. He appears to want my officers for his section which he desires to build up into an Empire. Such a lack of vision surprises me, as he has much vision in other lines.

I busted my annual physical examinations in early November, was ordered to the hospital, and on the 25th of January was ordered before the Retirement Board in Washington where I was recommended for retirement by physical disability. I think that this is quite right, as during the past few months my legs have

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shown signs of swelling and there is a certain amount of edema. It is nothing to be alarmed about, but it denies me the right to run up and down ladders as one on active duty must do.

I did not go out to the west coast at Christmas, although I had planned to do so, because I was in the hospital. It is true that the Hot Shot as such has been discontinued, but there is a pretty comfortable plane running out to the coast three times a week which I might catch. I plan to be out on the coast this summer whether I stay on this job or go out entirely.

I was delighted to note that you and Margaret are very pleased with the gift from the officers of the War College. However, I was concerned that Hoke Smith had seen fit to display my part in it. I want you to know that although I did run the affair, it was not so difficult as you indicate. On the contrary it was a sort of universal overflow of affection by the students and the staff for their late President. So far as I know, every regulation was complied with, so that there is no possible chance for you to feel, as you wrote Admiral Brown, that this gift might be in violation of the regulations. The same small sum was asked from each officer, and he was free to give or not give as he saw fit. Practically every officer in the War College gave his "mite", and the very few that did not missed out because I wasn't able to get them after they graduated. You see we tried to collect the money whenever possible after graduation. The engraving work was hand engraved by an engraver who asked for the "privilege." He spent some months on it. We made every effort to get it to you for Christmas. Thank Heaven we succeeded.

I received a card from your daughter Margaret in Warsaw, and although she said very little, my guess is, and you have reinforced the guess, that she is quite happy there.

We haven't had any bad weather all winter here except one small snow. However, heavy snow is expected today. I enjoy it, as at intervals it washes the filth out of the atmosphere and its loveliness washes the filth out of the minds of many people. There is an advantage in nature's loveliness!

The Russian situation is very much, I think, as you wrote. It appears to me as if it were quite possible that Russia needs help from the West to survive. Her satellites are not keeping as closely to Mama as the high command would like, and the success of the West in reconstruction cannot but have its imprint on the East.

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I don't know what to make of the Chinese situation as yet, but Commander Richardson, who was in my section last year, and Admiral Badger, with whom he appears to have talked, think that the Chinese Communists might be better than the Nationalists. I don't quite understand the whole story, but perhaps we will find out presently.

Newport is not gay but not dull. Social life is about as always in the winter.

The War College is progressing favorably. It is evidently building up a backlog of good will, and I think you can feel satisfied that you put it on firm foundations.

With warmest personal regards to you and Margaret, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Admiral R. A. Spruance
c/o Monterey Peninsula Country Club
Del Monte, California

0755

31 January 1949

Dear Eddie:

Thank you very much for the friendly manner with which you assisted me in my request for information concerning the new pay bill. I personally think that we are quite fortunate to have both you and Bill looking out for the naval end, and I feel sure that you will accomplish the high motives which impel you to disagree with certain of the bill's provisions. I can readily see why it is that you are anxious to retain, for example, for the enlisted men the 16 and 20 year retirement. I can also see why the sudden severance of officers from the naval list with little or no pay is not viewed favorably by the naval high command. What the boys seem to be afraid of here is that the U.S. will make a peace agreement with the Communists as a consequence of which the armed forces will necessarily be reduced. Many of the officers will then be invited to leave, and, unless they have pretty decent longevity, they will be severed with little or no "dough."

I noted in this morning's paper that the Forrestal Bill has gone to the budget. I don't know how long it will remain there or when it will hit the floor of the Congress. I hope that you will succeed in keeping me informed, so that I may retire before it becomes law, in order that I may not lose my two stars on the retirement list.

I like the manner with which this bill is being handled in that there is no particular publicity and no effort is being made to point out to the public any particular what appear to be inequities in pay which might adversely affect the bill but which are not, in fact, inequities at all. I personally think that the pay features of the bill are excellent. Although, based on the present dollar are not high enough--Fechteler's bill was more correct--they are better than perhaps we might have expected.

I was awfully glad to see you in the job that you understand so well. You are a capable fellow and will do well there. Perhaps one of these days Bill may decide to seize a good job at sea in which case yours will be the load.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Your Old Friend,

Capt. E.A.Solomons
Room 4 E 522 ND
Pentagon Building
Arlington, Va.

0756

1 February 1949

Dear Leon:

It was a source of great satisfaction to me to find that you were a member of my Retiring Board. You have always been an old friend of mine as has Admiral Griffin, and it was therefore a pleasure to renew an acquaintance of long ago. Very frankly, I was surprised to find that you were on duty. I had thought that you would be back in San Francisco again controlling the financial and insurance world, as my cousin John Fritschi appears to be doing in Oakland. However, it is good for the Navy that men of your experience have chosen to remain, as in my mind the Navy's greatest weakness today is the rapid advance of youth and the removal of experience from high places.

For your information, I am back here at the War College trying to assist my staff to complete the study of the Battle of Savo Island. This was at the special request of Vice Admiral Beary, President of the Naval War College, who feels that unless we seize this bull by the horns it may cost the government \$50,000 and waste time. I am not working too hard, in accordance with the best medical advice.

For your information, Eupers circular letter 245-48 is improperly worded. I think the Bureau is going to change the part in it concerning the movements of an officer about to be retired after he leaves the Retiring Board to conform more closely to the wording of my original orders.

I don't quite remember what your board said about my case as regards combat incurred disability. It seems to me that I recollect that you said my disability was incurred in actual combat with the enemy. I hope that this is so, as there is no doubt in my mind but that my heart damage was so incurred.

Take care of yourself, and let me know how things go with you. If I can do anything for you up here, say so. As ever,

Your Old Friend,

Capt. Leon Brown
Naval Retiring Board
Washington, D.C.

*Paterson Avenue
Bldg. 22
23rd and E Sts. NW
Navy Department*

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1 February 1949

Dear Bill:

It was nice to see you the other day in Washington, although it was a little hard for me to think that you were still going to be carrying the Flag while I was on the way out. However, I have no doubt that you will continue to carry it in the extremely creditable manner with which you have always succeeded in bearing it in the past. You are one of those few in whom I place my trust. I say few advisedly, for I frankly admit that I haven't too much confidence in many of the present flag officers. There is too much talk about too many of them to give confidence. Perhaps I am wrong, but I hate to see, at this time, officers of outstanding combat experience and success being retired for one reason or another and those with extremely limited sea service and combat experience in high command being moved into the command positions. I am afraid that the old guard dies but never surrenders!

I cannot thank you too much for the extremely friendly manner with which I am always greeted in your office. It is a great satisfaction to go into a busy department and to find there those who have time for other matters. One sign of a capable executive is the fact that he does have time--he has delegated his responsibility to competent assistants. This you appear to have done.

I am back up here at the War College on limited duty, trying to keep my staff interested and producing on the study of the Battle of Savo Island. This is an extremely important action. It is my hope that we are going to be as successful with it as we were with Midway and the Coral Sea.

I note that the pay bill has been turned over to the budget, where I suppose that it will remain for some time. I am trying to keep my eye on it from here, as I desire to retire before that provision denying me the advancement in rank has been passed. I know that everyone is pleased with the principal features of the new pay bill, but I realize also that there are certain features in it which may affect the Navy adversely. All that you can do on these is your best, and if you don't get them in, I don't think that it will, in any way, reduce your stature with your fellow naval officers. They all know the

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problem with which you are faced, and they all feel that no one could do it any better than you. However, I do think that everyone wants a new pay bill. They need more money and they think this bill is better than the old in that regard. I hope that we can get it passed.

The weather up here today is marvelous. We had a little snow yesterday, but the warm rain washed it away.

With warmest personal regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Vice Admiral William Fechteler
DCNO For Personnel
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

0759

3 February 1949

Dear Burrows:

I assume that you are Captain Chandler's successor, and as he was in on the instructions to the War College concerning the Evaluation and Study of the major naval Battles of World War II--letter Op-34F-MN(SC)QW 20, Ser. 0331P34 of 24 May, 1946--I thought I would write you a letter about the present situation.

We are now working on the Battle of Savo Island. We should be completed with this work by this summer. Perhaps you have seen some of my previous work, viz: the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway, both published by the War College.

We have experienced considerable trouble here in obtaining translations of Japanese documents from the CIA. In their last letter of 24 May last year they stated that they were under too much pressure and suggested that the War College employ a Japanese translator. This the War College could not do because its funds are entirely inadequate and its staff is even more limited today than it was yesterday.

I should appreciate your interest if you could ascertain for me or make recommendations to me on the method of procedure to obtain the necessary translations to accomplish all of the battles which have been recommended for study by the War College. At the present time there appears to be enough material available to complete the Battle of the Eastern Solomons probably around the end of the year, although it might take a little longer.

There is one battle which I have been repeatedly requested to do, but which I have refrained from attempting because it seemed best to finish the early important battles before we delved into the final great one. Also it seemed wise not to attack this final naval battle until some of the bitterness had subsided. It has been suggested to me by Vice Admiral Hill of the National War College, by Admiral Ofstie, inferentially by Admiral Kinkaid, and by numerous others, that

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Leyte Gulf be now attacked by my Analytical Department here.

I am endeavoring to find out at the present time, whether sufficient translations are available to accomplish this. Captain Chandler took a very strong stand regarding these works and insisted that Admiral Nimitz, Admiral Edwards, and others considered them of paramount importance in the study of command. Admiral Spruance and Admiral Beary concur. Have you any reactions in this matter?

One of these days I shall endeavor to see you with regard to this whole affair. A prompt reply concerning the above matters will be appreciated.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Captain T. Burrows
Room 4D 560 ND
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

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3 February 1949

Dear Mort:

That was a very friendly letter which you wrote me, and I am hastening to reply to it.

You are quite right, I was ordered before the Retiring Board and I will be retired as of May 1st, more or less. If the new pay bill appears to have chances of being passed before May 1st, the Navy Department plans to retire me before that date so that I may retire as a Rear Admiral. The present new pay bill--the Hook bill--does away with advancements on the retired list. Maybe you had better look into that, because you might be denied the chance of being the Vice Admiral which you should have been long ago. The Navy Department is opposing, so far as I know, this portion of the bill, as well as the portions denying 16 and 20 year retirements to enlisted men and those portions which make it difficult for young officers to choose the Navy as a career. The idea of the present pay bill as conceived and expressed by the sponsors is that it makes the Navy the same as a civilian job. If you want to wear a uniform you go into the armed services. If you would rather not wear a uniform you go into civilian pursuits where your chances of promotion and pay are about the same. I bitterly protested this on the ground that the security and glamour of the Navy in the Armed Services was being systematically killed. Bill Fechteler is very alert to all of this and will, I am sure, do his utmost to get the best break possible for the Navy. How well he will succeed, the next few months will tell.

But to get back to myself. As you perhaps know, I was found in February 1946 to have a left bundle branch block of my heart. This is a rather serious thing, but how serious can only be determined in each case. The Army and the Navy both recommended me for retirement then and there. I came home to Mare Island Hospital in May and was declared fit for any and all duty upon the especial request of Admiral Denfeld and Admiral Conolly who both stated that I headed the list of those who had been treated shamefully by King, and that they were going to have a panel to promote me, among others. I had the Survey Board at Mare Island declare me fit after two months of argument. The Spruance Panel came along and I was not on it. For your information and not for publication, Mitscher wrecked

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that Panel and saw to it that it did not comply with the basic idea. I got this from Admiral Denfeld himself, and also from Frank Beatty, to whom Admiral Mitscher spoke of his success in choosing his friends in the low age brackets. Admiral Spruance told me that he was astonished to discover that whenever he boosted someone, as he did me, he instantly drew upon the man he boosted, opposition of certain Admirals on the Board, and thereby denied the officer advancement. Please do not quote me on this. The Denfeld Board came along, and last year Olie, who was a member, told me that I was in the finals, that I got extraordinarily fine support before the Board, and that he thought I would make it. Not only did I not make it, but to date he has promoted no one out of his own command. Meanwhile, I had thought of quitting, because the doctors wanted me to, but Admiral Nimitz still felt that I was going to be promoted, and he asked me last summer not to retire. He even had a telegram sent me on the subject. How futile all of this was!

You ask why I haven't been promoted. The above is a partial answer. But the real answer, in my mind, is that I have been too outspoken in my naval career. Perhaps I was a fool, and didn't have the suavity that I should have had. On the other hand, I could not fail to speak out against evident errors in strategy and planning, and I wrote many articles during the war, generally as action reports, but not always. I have been told that although these articles were absolutely correct, and history has so proven them to be, they irritated King no end. What King appeared to desire was yes-men. Well, he has had a stroke, and I am sleeping nights. Which would you prefer?

I don't know where I am going to go after I retire. I am trying to finish the Battle of Savo Island. It has been suggested in Washington that I come back as Rear Admiral on the retired list to do this. However, I am not inclined to accept unless the time allotted is in years and not in months. It took me a year and a half to do the Battle of Midway and about eight months to do the Coral Sea. It is going to take me almost a year to do Savo Island because of the many interferences. I should like to do Leyte Gulf which is also a year and a half job as a minimum.

I hope that you have read my first two books--Midway and Coral Sea. Needless to say, I have been extremely gratified in the many commendations I have received on them.

I am back at the War College at the special request of Vice Admiral Beary and, incidentally, of the Bureau of Personnel. I am on limited time, as there is still some doubt among the medi-

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cal profession as to whether I should be doing this work at all. They feel that I should not get bogged down in any job where I am to be exposed to high pressure, and, on occasions, the young staff officers here succeed in raising mine. However, we shall see.

I am very anxious, and have been most anxious, to see you since I have been here. You probably well know that I am devoted to both you and Lila, but unfortunately I never go to Boston. However, if you will name the time, I will make it a point and come most gladly. ●

With warmest personal regards and very deep appreciation of your continuing interest in me, I am,

Your Old Chief of Staff,

Rear Admiral M. L. Deyo
Commandant First Naval District
495 Summer Street
Boston 10, Mass.

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7 February 1949

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R. I.

Dear Leon:

I have carried out your wishes as regards the correspondence course and the responsible Heads say "tell him to get it in within the next three months". So there you are!

Thanks for the information about the wording of my papers. I would have sworn that Admiral Griffin read "incurred in combat". That was what I had hoped for. Otherwise, I might have commented then.

"War or National Emergency" applies to anyone anywhere and has no combat connotations. When I went to the front as I told your Board I had a heart check at the Newport Hospital. This was in the Survey Report. The test was normal. I was steadily in combat for almost 3 years thereafter. At the end of this time I showed up with a bundle branch block. Where else could it have developed except in combat with the enemy. I wasn't in combat with anyone else - I hope, I hope.

Thus under the wording you have chosen I am given no distinction over anyone who did not have the good fortune to meet the enemy in battle, but instead was on local and safe duty - even tho thru no fault of his own. Is not a damaged heart worse than the loss of a leg or even an arm? Are combat incurred wounds solely those by shell alone?

This is an important point. It isn't that I want a government job. It solely is this - that the government will look out for her disabled - particularly combat disabled-veterans. But those with labels like mine will probably receive no preference whatsoever on income tax or what have you. In fact, such a move is already underway in the new Hook Pay Bill.

What I think I should have had was "incurred in combat operations against the enemy".

Take care of yourself! Best to you. As ever,

Your old friend,

Capt. Leon Brown
Naval Retiring Board
Washington, D.C.

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9 February 1949

Dear Andy:

The other day I heard about some celebrity who was stopping in Hawaii with Dad Center. I was extremely interested immediately, as that reminded me of your own beloved Peggy, and my thoughts returned to Hawaii. I listen at intervals to "Hawaii Calls". However, I don't like the announcer for "Hawaii Calls"--I think the announcer should be someone from Hawaii who understands the language and the traditions, and who has that love of the islands which exists probably only in those who have lived there most of their lives. To hear an American voice from the Middle West talking about Hawaii in Hawaiian is very disconcerting to my sensitive ear.

There is a gentleman from Newport who is staying at the Halekulani Hotel who would be interested in knowing you. His name is Frazier Jelke, and although he is in his late sixties, he seems much younger. His family are the oleomargarine kings of the U.S. Frazier has written me complaining that he hasn't met many of the younger people in Honolulu. Perhaps you can turn some of them loose on him.

I know that it was nice for Sock McMorris to go back to Pearl. I have always like him, and have no doubt that he will do well in his present assignment.

I am here at the War College, but I retire on May 1st about, because of a heart ailment which I got in the war. I am not any different in appearance than when you last saw me, but my stamina has deteriorated some degree. What I shall do after I retire, I do not know, because what I may do is limited by the medicos. Don't be alarmed about me, as I am not even alarmed about myself.

Give my best to my old Hawaiian friends. It is always wonderful to see them. Last summer I saw both Louise and Betty Lou Dillingham here in Newport. They were fine and were as friendly as always.

I hope that your children are as wonderful today as both of you are and always have been to your friends. They have a very high example to follow. Have they inherited the musical accomplishments of their parents?

Best Aloha.

Your Old Friend,

Alexander Anderson
von-Harmon - Young Co.
San Francisco, Calif.

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11 February 1949

Dear Dr. White:

I am an officer of the U.S. Navy who is about to be retired for physical disability incident to war. My difficulty is that I have a left bundle branch block. As I may be departing from this area in the next few months, I should like to discuss my situation with you some day within the immediate future. Could such an appointment be made?

I am not in any particular difficulty, with exception that a slight edema has shown up in my legs and a slight swelling.

I am still on active duty but under limited orders, as I am writing the critical analyses of the war.

With hopes that you will find time to give me an appointment, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Dr. Paul D. White
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, Mass.

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10 February 1949

Dear Frazier:

I received your two news-letters with intense interest, and I was very gratified to receive the card written in green ink. I understand green ink represents Frazier Jelke. I have taken the liberty of showing your two news-letters to the members of the Reading Room who found them full of meat, particularly the news-letter No. 6.

I have written to Mr. Alexander Anderson, who is Vice President of the Von-Hamm-Young Company, and to Mr. Earl Thacker, head of Thacker & Co., to look out for you. They know everybody of all ages and I am sure they will call you. Whether they do or not, I request that you call them, not only for your own information but to say "Hello" for me. In Hawaii I am known as Dickey Bates and not as Batesy as I am here.

The weather in Newport all winter has been so excellent as to make it rather silly for anyone to leave here excepting to go to places like Hawaii, Palm Beach and Nassau. Those three places seem to have maintained a more or less salubrious temperature. However, the temperature here in Newport yesterday was sixty. Can you do better than that?

I am making this letter short in order to get it into the mail to you as soon as I can.

I was glad to see that you have met the Navy, as Admiral Ramsey, Admiral McMorris and Admiral McCrea are all very good friends of mine and have done fine jobs for their Flag.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Mr. Frazier Jelke
Halekulani Hotel
Kalia Road
Honolulu, T.H.

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12 February 1949

Gentlemen:

I have been advised recently by Commodore Hersey that there has been a recent vote as to the possibility of selling the Army and Navy Club. As I am one of the life members of this club, I am surprised that I have not been consulted with others. I was made a life member on the 14th of May, 1946--the number of my card being 2315. It is signed--Harry Adamson, Secretary.

I became a life member at the time that I was Chief of Staff for the Philippine Sea Frontier. I should appreciate a statement from you recognizing this life membership which possibly may somehow have been lost among others.

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates
Captain, U.S.N.

Army and Navy Club
Manila, P.I.

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16 February 1949

Dear Roy:

Today several officers at the War College, notably, Admiral Brown and Lt. Cdr. Williams, received telegrams from your office advising them that they had been awarded an honorable mention which included a financial prize. Naturally everyone here is very pleased at the success of these officers, as insofar as I am concerned it reflects very well upon the War College. You may have been interested to note in this connection that a number of officers from the War College submitted competing articles.

Some months ago, about October 25th, one of the officers at the War College, Commander Walter D. Innis, submitted an article entitled "The Atomic Bomb As A Psychological Weapon." He is concerned that he has never had an acknowledgement or other communication with relation to this article. The post office states that it was delivered. Could you advise me as to what action has been taken on this article?

I was very pleased to discover that you were the brain behind the Naval Institute. I remember well your activities in that regard when you were a younger officer, and I have no doubt but that you are excelling in your present assignment. Certainly the Institute is an interesting naval publication, and it enjoys a prominent place in the Reading Room in Newport.

I saw Homer Graf today. He has retired, and is living in the vicinity of Tiverton, R.I.

As for myself, I am slated to retire for physical disability about May 1st. At the present time and for the past two years I have been writing the critical analyses of the conduct of the commanders of World War II, and it has been highly interesting.

With warmest personal regards and with congratulations on the success of your recent contest, I am as ever,

Your Old Pal,

Cdr. Roy de S. Horn
Managing Editor
U.S. Naval Institute
U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland

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